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New tools for donor-advised funds tap the social aspect of giving
By Rob Burgess
June 16, 2025, 2:58 p.m. EDT

Users of the charitable giving platform Daffy can now replicate existing campaigns instead of having to create their own from scratch.

The "Create a Campaign Like This" feature is now live on the existing Daffy Campaigns feature, which now also features templates, AI-powered personalization and suggested campaigns.

"One of our core beliefs at Daffy is that by removing friction we can dramatically increase the amount of charitable giving," Adam Nash, co-founder and CEO of Daffy, told Financial Planning. "We know people are generous, but we saw that some members hesitated when creating a campaign — not because they lacked motivation, but because they weren't sure what to say or how to structure it."

Nash was previously director of eBay Express North America from 2003 to 2007. He said at eBay, he saw the same problem when people tried to create listings.

"But it's 2025 now, and we have new ways that we can help people create inspiring campaigns," he said.

Daffy is a membership-based donor-advised fund (DAF) platform. What it calls "campaigns" are structured fundraisers that members can devise to raise money for all types of causes. For financial advisors, the platform and its tools are of note because they could encourage clients to develop a strategy on philanthropy — one that's tax-deductible.

Daffy's new AI-powered features make it easier and faster for users to turn intention into action, Nash said; the new tools do not use or share personal member data externally.

"Whether it's suggesting a title, generating a description or supplying compelling images, AI helps lower the barrier to launching a campaign," he said. "We even use AI to recommend campaign ideas based on a member's past giving, so they can easily support causes they already care about. … Trust and security are core to everything we do, and we've built our AI features with that same commitment."

Members have asked for the ability to raise money from their DAF, which works like charity savings accounts, not just to give personally, but to raise money for the organizations they support and to get others involved "almost from day one," said Nash.

"What makes Daffy Campaigns so powerful is the unique nature of a DAF: Our members have already set money aside for charity," he said. "That means they're ready to give. But unlike the large, traditional DAF providers, Daffy gives members the ability to turn that donation into a public matching campaign to inspire others. It's a missed opportunity because people who proactively set money aside for giving are often the most committed to making an impact."

Since launching Daffy Campaigns in November 2023, Nash said the firm has seen hundreds of fundraisers tied to birthdays, weddings, memorials, schools and crisis response.

"We wanted to build on those patterns and make it dramatically easier to launch and share these types of campaigns," he said. "Most DAFs, operated by financial institutions, focus primarily on accumulating assets. … We see matching campaigns as not only offering our members another way to give but more importantly, a chance to magnify your impact by inspiring others to give as well."

Most financial goals are personal: saving for a new house or planning for retirement, said Nash. Giving, however, has always been social at its core, he said

"Whether it's friends coming together for a fundraiser, families honoring a loved one with a memorial campaign, or communities rallying around crisis relief like the L.A. fires, people are inspired to give when they see others step up. Peer-to-peer fundraisers simply work. … With Daffy Campaigns, anyone can launch a fundraiser and instantly invite others to join not just by donating but by creating their own version of that campaign. It is about turning one act of generosity into many."

When you make giving easy and tied to a story or an emotion, donors respond, said Robin Berlinsky, CEO of education nonprofit Engaging Creative Minds in Charleston, South Carolina.

"Like many for-profit companies, nonprofit CEOs focus on the return on investment, and it appears that tools like Daffy's new campaign features significantly simplify the process while allowing nonprofits to make a deep emotional connection with the donor who can then act fast," she said. "In a world where attention is scarce and smartphones are king, this is exactly the kind of innovation nonprofits need."